## Idaho Transportation Department

Safe Routes to School
Program Training
January 11, 2008

## Training Purpose

Provide the information you need to start a Safe Routes to School program



## Agenda

- National SRTS Program
- SRTS in Idaho
- Planning Your SRTS Program
- IDT Funding Application
- Question and Answers

## Welcome and Introductions

## Federal Safe Routes to School Program

What is Safe Routes to School?
Why is it a national focus?
What barriers must be overcome?

## Included in transportation bill

- $612 million to States 2005-2009
- Funds infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities
- Requires State SRTS Coordinators
- Program, not a one-time project



More Information:
www.saferoutesinfo.org

## Safe Routes to School Programs

- Make walking and bicycling to school safer
- Encourage more children to walk and bike to school



## Fewer kids bike and walk. More parents are driving.

- 2001: 16% walked

- 1969: 42% walked

*(CDC, 2005)*



## Physical activity

Most kids are not getting the physical activity they need.
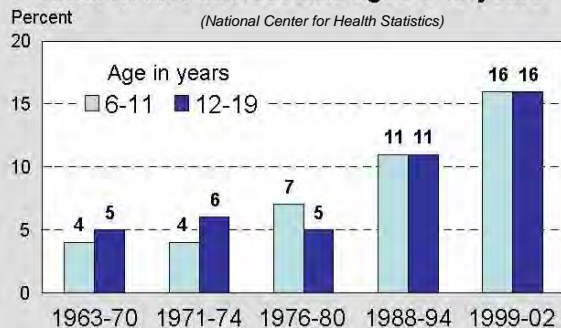


## Physical activity recommendation for children:

At least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

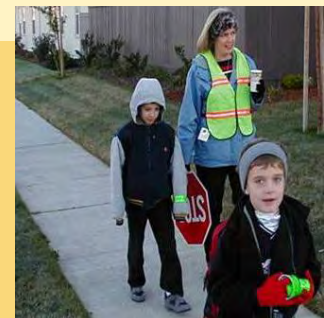*(US Depts. of Health and Human Services and Agriculture, 2005)*



10

### Prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents ages 6-19 years

Percent          *(National Center for Health Statistics)*

Age in years
☐ 6-11   ■ 12-19

| Year | 6-11 | 12-19 |
|------|------|-------|
| 1963-70 | 4 | 5 |
| 1971-74 | 4 | 6 |
| 1976-80 | 7 | 5 |
| 1988-94 | 11 | 11 |
| 1999-02 | 16 | 16 |

NOTE: Excludes pregnant women starting with 1971-74. Pregnancy status not available for 1963-65 and 1966-70. Data for 1963-65 are for children 6-11 years of age; data for 1966-70 are for adolescents 12-17 years of age, not 12-19 years.
SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, NHES and NHANES

## Air quality

Measurably better around schools with more walkers and cyclists

*(EPA, 2003)*



12

### 1996 Summer Olympic Games banned single occupant cars in downtown Atlanta



13

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### Results of the ban

- Morning traffic – ⬇ 23%

- Peak ozone – ⬇ 28%

- Asthma-related events for kids – ⬇ 42%

*(Journal of the American Medical Association [JAMA], 2001)*

14

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### Benefits of SRTS programs

- Reduce the number of children hit by cars
- Reduce congestion around schools
- Improve children's health
- Reduce air pollution
- Reduce need for "hazard" busing
- Others: increase child's sense of freedom, help establish lifetime habits, teach pedestrian skills
- Improve conditions for everyone, all the time

15

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### Barriers to walking and bicycling to school (survey)

- Long distances           62%

- Traffic danger           30%

- Adverse weather          19%

- Fear of crime danger     12%

*(CDC, 2005)*

16

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### It's not just distance

Students who live within 1 mile who DO NOT walk or bike to school

2001: 37%
1969: 13%

*(CDC, 2005)*



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### Traffic danger

## Adverse weather



Is this barrier reflective of changed social norms?

## Fear of crime danger

- Identify perceptions and realities—both are important to address

- Some low probability events provoke the greatest fears

- Communities are finding ways to safeguard against these fears

20

## Community conditions make it hard to walk or bike



S. Maplewood    Boise                                    21

## Every school faces a different challenge



## National SRTS: Summary

- SRTS are programs to promote more kids walking and biking in safer environments
- A focus because of kids' health; congestion; air quality
- Barriers include community conditions, security, safety

23

## SRTS in Idaho

- Is funding available?
- Have others in Idaho been successful?
- How can you overcome barriers at your school?

24

## Idaho Transportation Dept Funding

- Cost reimbursement program
- Up to $100,000 for infrastructure
  - Example: sidewalks
- Up to $25,000 for noninfrastructure
  - Example: educational materials
- More later on requirements and application process

25

# Bonneville School District Program

Guy Bliesner

26

## Overcoming Barriers

- Comprehensive SRTS Program
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Enforcement
  - Engineering
  - Evaluation



## Education

- Teaches safety skills
- Creates safety awareness
- Fosters life-long safety habits
- Includes parents, neighbors and other drivers



28

## Encouragement



- Increases popularity of walking and biking
- Is an easy way to start SRTS programs
- Emphasizes fun of walking and biking

29

## Encouragement



LINCOLN SCHOOL
FREQUENT WALKER/RIDER
2003-04

Walk to School:
Begin a lifetime of
healthy exercise!

Collect your card punches on
Walk to School Days!

30

## Enforcement

- Increases awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists

- Improves driver behavior

- Helps children follow traffic rules

- Decreases parent perceptions of danger

31

## Engineering

- Creates safer settings for walking and biking

- Can influence the way people behave

32

## Evaluation

- Did we achieve our goals?
- Do we need to modify our approach?
- Idaho:

Gather data for 2 years

33

## SRTS in Idaho: Summary

- Funding is available
- SRTS are successful in Idaho
- Comprehensive programs help overcome barriers

34

## Planning Your Program

1. Identify Partners
2. Identify Problems
3. Select Solutions

35

## 1. Identify Partners

- Who should you include as partners?

36

# Involving Police Officers

Chief Moon, Weiser P.D.

## 2. Identify Problems

- What barriers do you know exist? Work in groups to create a list of typical barriers to walking to school

## 2. Identify Problems

**Why**
- Know barriers to overcome
- Identify preferred walk/bike routes
- School Travel Plan

**Where**
- School Site
- Attendance and/or walking boundary

## School study area: Attendance boundary

## School study area: Attendance boundary



School site and adjacent streets usually need the most attention
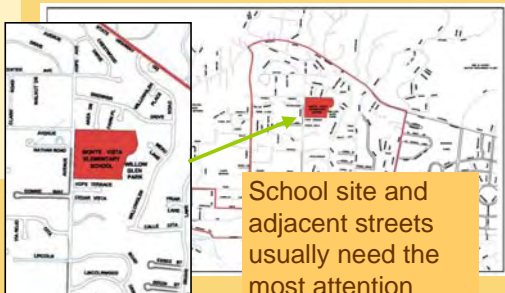
## 2. Identify Problems

**How**
- Observation
- Parent Surveys
- Ask: crossing guards, teachers, officers,etc
- Data: crashes

## Observation

- Walking Audit or assessment
- May require several people stationed at difference locations or walking neighborhoods

## School Site

- Student Entrance/Front Doors
- Paths / Bike Racks
- Driveway Crossings
- Street Crossings
- Bus Loading and Parent Pick-up Areas
- Problem Areas

44

## During Arrival & Dismissal

- Motorist Behavior
  - On Neighborhood streets
  - In School Parking Lot
- Pedestrian Behavior
- Bicyclist Behavior
- Crossing Guards/Teacher Monitors
- Pick up and Drop off Areas

45

## Relationships are everything

School

Sidewalk

Street

Crossing

## What we saw....
## Pick up/Drop Off

## No stopping lane

## Is this a problem?



## Is this a problem?



## Intersections
## School site & neighborhood

- Crosswalk markings
- Signs
- Controls (stop signs, guards, signals)
- Visibility between drivers and students
- Enough room for students to wait
- Driver/Student behavior

52

## What we saw....

- Guard has proper clothing & stop paddle
- Uses correct process
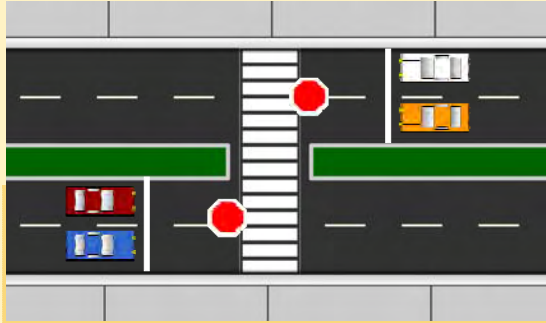- Appears well-trained



53

## What do you see?

## Two crossing guards on multi-lane roads





## Neighborhood Walking Audits

- Same process
- MUCH larger area
- Use volunteers to help?
  - Phoenix, AZ
  - Volunteers assigned to segments
  - Engineers follow up and create walking map

57

## What's wrong with this picture?



## What's wrong with this picture?



## What's wrong with this picture?

## Record what you see

- Take photos
- Audit/Assessment Forms
- Make notes
- Mark up maps

61

## Parent Surveys

- See sample
- Barriers to overcome
- Establish a baseline…where you are now
- Data can be compiled by National Center for Safe Routes to School

62

## Involve Others



**Why**
- Complete picture
- Gains support

**How: Ask & LIsten**
- One-on-one
- Meetings

## Crash Data



- Must be accurate and current
- Need details (accident report)
- May not reveal the whole picture

64

## Compile Information



## Summary: Identify Problems

Why: Barriers; suitable walk/bike routes
Where: School site and neighborhood
How: Observe, surveys, ask/listen

66

# Questions / Issues?

67